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THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ETHICS

APRIL, 1917.

THE INTERNATIONAL IDEA.

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Preface.

I AM writing this on service, in the intervals of military duty, and amid difficulties regarding materials, references, and so on. It may never be finished. One never knows. But despite all disadvantages of time and position the impulse is irresistible to put down even in a crude and general form certain ideas to the peaceful growth of which war has put the ripening touch. The result will be, I know, not any profound or exhaustive study of a great subject; but, at the best, an attempt at suggestion and inspiration. Nevertheless I shall write. One cannot live through this war—at least I cannot—without being filled with a fierce longing for humanity to redeem itself in the future from a state of international barbarism, and with an aching desire to help, if only in the smallest way, in the work of redemption. One cannot stay idle, or without expression;—I cannot. And one is consoled for the presumption of daring publicity by the reflection that the more thoughts—even trite and inadequate thoughts, indifferently expressed—that are put forward tending in the right direction, the more assurance will be given that the right path will be taken.

The time is short and precious. I will waste no more words in preface but get to my task.

Vol. XXVII.—No. 3.

Why then, and for what are we waiting? There are three words to speak: *We will it*, and what is the foeman but the dream-strong awakened and weak.

(William Morris: "Pilgrims of Hope.")

I.

Nationality and Internationality.

Be certain about your goal before you set out for it.

This sounds like, and is, a platitude. But many splendid platitudes live lives that are in the main obscure, neglected, and without effect. This is one of them. With only too many people (as with Stevenson's youth) the great thing is to go. The direction is not so important.

Let us be certain about our goal.

Is internationalism a good thing? If so, absolutely? or with qualifications?

There are, roughly, three aspects of mind towards internationalism. There is the aspect of mind which envisages the nations of the world as individuals—each self-contained and un-blending; each an entity in itself, *teres atque rotundus*. There is the aspect of mind which sees in the collected nationalities only an assemblage of human beings,—of variegated and divers human beings, but of beings essentially the same in nature and potentiality, and making one tremendous whole. The first mind will call the second mind visionary and futile; the second mind will call the first mind narrow and wrong. There is a third aspect of mind, which is an intermediate one. It recognizes nations as individuals, with the first mind; and humanity as a collection of substantially similar mortals, with the second mind; and it can see the intrinsic good in each conception. The result is that it comes to regard the world as an assemblage of individual nations, differing (as is proper and beneficial) in characteristics, but so bound together by mutual needs and inspirations as to necessitate the formation and recognition of a sort of comradeship or association towards common ends.

This type of mind will reason thus about the specific virtues of nationalism and internationalism respectively:

“I see that a common and unrelieved monotony of bowler-hatted uniformity would be an abomination of desolation. (Not that I believe nature would ever permit of such!) I am quite convinced that variety of manner, custom, tradition, sentiment, and ways of living is as essential and excellent among nations as among individuals. I should deplore that the hard-headed commonsense of the North and the sunny buoyancy of the South should be blent into a colourless (if theoretically perfect) average. I know that the nations should jealously preserve their national traits; their distinctive dress, their peculiar speech, their individual habits of thought. But I am absolutely sure that some co-operation among the nations is desirable, indeed necessary, in the common interests of humanity. And I believe that the advantages of such co-operation can be attained without losing the advantages of independent nationality.”

That is how such a type of mind will reason.

It is a question whether one can think too broadly in this matter. It is a question whether nature would not have her way and produce variety however much man tried to produce uniformity. It is a question whether, even though fashion decreed felt hats for all; though law prescribed similar rules for every nation; though coinage, measures, stamps, tariffs, and the materials of life were as far as possible standardized, the seeds of nationality would not still flourish in the new soil. Climate and heredity, the great influencing factors in nationality, would still hold their sway. The sun and story of Spain would still ensure a race of hot-blooded men and amorous women; the hills and history of Wales would still send forth their strange, melancholy dreamers; the soft skies and hard persecutions of Ireland would still make the Irish a race of poets and rebels. Even travel and inter-marriage, even cars that covered a hundred miles an hour, trains that took men five thousand miles a day, or flying machines that circled the world in a week, would not be potent to undo nature's forces.

But it is no question at all that it is possible to think too narrowly in this matter. Shortness of vision, insularity, international ignorance, call it what you will, lies at the root of international evil. Nor does nature help here. Nature can keep a man a Scotchman wherever he goes, but nature cannot make him travel. Nature can salt an English family with the Irish flavour by three generations' residence in Ireland; but nature will not take the family to Ireland. Nature, in a word, can take care of nationality; but it cannot take care of internationality. That is man's work. And a work he can pursue, at all events for the present, and probably for all time, with no qualms lest he go too far. For he can accomplish the good, that is certain; but it is doubtful whether nature will let him accomplish any ill. Be that as it eventually may, there is a vast area of undebatable ground ahead in the work of promoting internationalism. So far as we can see into the future our goal is purely good; the international idea can be freely and vigourously pursued.

How? How far? Those are matters of practicability; and it is from theory to practice that we can, and must, now proceed.

Let it be granted, then, that the conception of nationality and internationality which we have endorsed is, so to speak, a system of humanity in which the simple figure representing each nation is resolved into a numerator of nationality standing over a common denominator of internationality. Our task is to determine that common denominator, and to decide how it is to be attained.

Now the scope of this common denominator of internationality, the matter in which the nations shall have a common understanding, will be the subject of what I have to write after this. Suffice it to say that there is undoubtedly a number of matters in which it would pay the nations to come to some common agreement.

As to methods, there we come to a wide and difficult subject. Matters of machinery will be gone into later, and the way of treating various problems will be best dealt with

as those problems arise. But on the general subject of how to get mankind to go forward at all, there is a word to be said. Briefly, we must get men to conceive of the international idea; to think more internationally. There are two great civilizing influences in this direction; travel and education. By travel a man loses (unless he be exceptionally stupid) much of his narrow insularity. By education he can be drawn towards broader and more generous ideals of human life. If we are to succeed in our task of attaining a larger internationalization of the world, we must use these tools that lie to our hand. Travel must be promoted and facilitated. Even the poor man must be able to appreciate the life of foreign nations. (In this direction the war will have done much.) And we must educate. That is at once easier and more difficult. Easier, because we can educate at once, and at home, and without new machinery. We have the apparatus, we have only to use it well. More difficult, because we have to convert and inspire the directors of our educational policy (and other nations have to convert and inspire theirs) before we can do anything. Moreover, more is implicated by "education" than the grounding of the young in general principles or in such particular practical details of international subjects as can form the material for international instruction to-day, or may be recommended in later articles. Much can be done that way. The young mind may be given an international bent; it may be equipped linguistically, socially, and materially to avail itself of the advantages of internationalism. But we must also proselytize among the men and women of to-day. Their minds must also turn in the direction of internationalism. Therefore the great need is that there should be earnest and energetic apostles of internationalism. Let us cry the truth, and it shall then prevail.

There are great practical problems ahead of constructive minds in this matter of internationalism. Let us by all means discuss and elucidate them. Let us prepare the way. But the first great thing is to get mankind to think more internationally.

II.

War and Law.

I suppose nobody save a fanatic would deny that it would be a good thing if the nations settled their differences by some sort of peaceful arbitration instead of by war. The manifest futility of the argument of brute force as opposed to that of reason and justice; the patent horrors of carnage and mutilation; the crushing financial burdens and the appalling material waste, entailed by an appeal to arms,—in a word the calamitous folly of the whole business,—must outweigh anything that could be advanced in favour of militarism as a training school of courage and health, and so on. No; the serious man's misgivings as to schemes of international arbitration are not of a theoretic but of a practical nature. "It's all right," he says, "but it can't be done."

Well, it can be done. It could be done to-morrow.

Of this subject above all others it is true that:

" . . . There are three words to speak:

We will it, and what is the foeman but the dream-strong wakened and weak."

Two things indeed, both immediately attainable, are needed in order to substitute law for war among the nations: faith and work. Faith to inspire clear-sighted confidence in the practicability of the task; work to carry it out.

This is not all a dream; it is hard fact. To believe in it one need not be a visionary indulging in hopes of a human nature free from sin and malice and filled with brotherly love; one need not preach the abandonment of force and the substitution of a gentle reasonableness. One can be, and must be, a hard-headed and intelligent human being, basing his schemes and theories simply on the facts of life. But one must have faith. And one must work.

Faith does not mean blind faith. The true faith sees very clearly. In fact it is itself a kind of clearness of vision, induced by throwing off prejudice, timidity, and distrust. And our first task must be to strip our subject of all false,

visionary, and immaterial encumbrances. First as to force. One must have no dreams or illusions about force. Force is the ultimate argument of humanity. It is—at present at all events—the sanction of law. Behind the law must be force; where would laws be without the police? But force must be properly applied. It must be, not individual and capricious force, but co-operative and reasonable force. When the world is truly civilized it will still employ force; but it will be force behind the law, not obscuring it.

Here is the kernel and crux of the whole matter. How are we to, not do away with force, but ensure its application in its proper capacity? In the old days individual barons and chieftains, collecting armed men, were able to impose their arbitrary will on their neighbours. With the broadening of civilization these exhibitions of individual and capricious force were rendered impossible and useless, and the common will, supported by centralized and co-operative force reigned supreme. More than this, directly the new régime superseded the old, it became unprofitable and useless, as well as lawless, for individuals to sustain their private armaments. These armaments therefore disappeared. How can this process be made to take place internationally, as it has taken place nationally?

There is no impossibility about it. It is possible to have a community of nations “keeping the peace”; punishing and preventing infractions of the peace; having at their disposal for these purposes sufficient force to take the matter in time and suppress attempts to supplant an appeal to the tribunals by individual violence;—in fact, it is possible to put an end to international rowdyism. Make no mistake; it is possible; and it will be done sooner or later. Why not sooner? Most important perhaps of all, the substitution of law *plus* co-operative force for anarchy *plus* individual force will mean the passing away of the need or use of great national armaments. It will be as foolish to have a huge standing army in any state as it would be to carry a revolver in Piccadilly.

Now all this can be done, and can be done just as soon as a sufficient number of persons realize that it can be done.

Three things are necessary:

- (1) Laws.
- (2) A tribunal.
- (3) The sanction, or force, behind.

The laws are not the chief difficulty. The difficulty is to prevent their being disobeyed. Even if they are not perfect laws, it is better to have indifferent laws than anarchy. The law is notoriously a "hass," but he is better than a raging lion.

Most of this also applies to the tribunal. Granted that we cannot obtain an assembly of supermen, we can yet obtain a body of well-meaning persons who will say something. The great thing is to see that what they say "goes." County court judges are not Solomons, but their judgments are carried out—without rioting.

Moreover, it is very important to remember that such an international tribunal need not be a Parliament of Man or Federation of the World; it need have scarcely any deliberative or executive functions. It need have only two essentially simple duties; first, to register the agreements made between nations, and secondly to see that in case of discord, recourse is had to arbitration, and the world's peace is kept. A third duty might, and would naturally in the end, fall to the share of this tribunal—to decide on the particular cases of dispute which might arise. But at first it might be best to reserve this duty for *ad hoc* courts, composed of members who should be (as in cases of trade disputes) agreed upon by both sides. The great thing is, to keep the peace; to see that arbitration and not war is appealed to;—even, to gain time. Most wars would never occur if nations had to wait a week or two before they plunged into them.

There should be no question not referable to arbitration. "Honour" has been found to be an insufficient reason for individuals killing one another irrationally; it should be an insufficient reason for nations killing one another irrationally.

And, as in the case of national law, "breaking the peace" should be enough to bring in the police. "No rowdyism! Come and settle it in court." Whether "carrying arms" (internationally) should be prevented, or whether, as in civilized places, it would fall into disuse through the growth of a sense of lawfulness, and a recognition of the futility of doing so, is a point which need not now concern us. But, as to "breaking the peace"; mobilization of any kind could be held to constitute this. War should be nipped in the bud.

How?

Now we come to the crux and kernel of the whole;—the sanction of the international will;—the force behind the tribunal. This is where the risk of a collapse of our scheme occurs; this is where the schemes of many well-intentioned persons do collapse. But schemes need not collapse here.

What is our problem? It is to place behind the will-of-nations-to-prevent-war a sufficient force to carry that will into operation. It is this force that is the chief point, the laws and the tribunal are much less material—shadowy things, merely representing in some sort of concrete form that will-of-nations-to-have-the-peace-kept—organizing and distributing machinery for the force. The force is the thing.

In order to get at the nature and form of this force let us presume a world agreed to prevent war; agreed that if treaties are to be kept and the peace maintained some kind of force must be present behind "scraps of paper" and pious resolutions; agreed that to organize and dispose that force some centralized machinery is necessary—no, we will not yet presume that last point; let us presume they jib at any kind of centralized executive and see how we get on. Because a very common and influentially-supported scheme to employ force in the interests of international peace, is through a league of peace whereby certain nations—or all nations—agree to take steps, without any centralized management, acting simply in concert, to stop war breaking out.

Now heaven forbid that one should do or say anything to check the nations in even the smallest advance down the road to a truer civilization! And a league of peace would be a step forward, a large step forward; perhaps, even, a decisive step forward. But I, at least, do not think it will ultimately be found to meet the case completely, and I think there will be found two inherent defects in the scheme. These two defects are liability to intrigue and lack of plans.

Suppose in order to stop the probability of rioting in the case of trade disputes you were to say: "We will not have any actual police; but the masters shall train one body of men, the men another, who shall prevent rioting if feeling runs high over a dispute." Supposing, even, you said (let us say in the coal industry): "There will also be trained bodies of men belonging to the railways, the cotton industry, the engineering trade, and so on, to all of whom will fall the duty of helping to insure peace." Would you rely on it that there would be peace? Would you not expect that, when the emergency arose, each of these bodies would have private sympathies, and that it would, in practice, be found impossible to quell the one trouble without starting a greater?

Would it not be so among the nations? You cannot expect national prejudice, national antipathy, national hate or love, to disappear at the blast of a trumpet.

Then as to lack of plans. If there be no centralized machinery, how are eventualities to be prepared for? Is the League of Peace to have one plan to deal with Germany, another with England, another with Italy, and so on? Then it virtually does become a central body—a hampered and clumsy one, it is true, but a central body with deliberative and executive functions. If no such plans are to be made, you will find the nations falling into the old cliques and associations to protect their own interests—to prevent war against *themselves*, and things will be much as they were.

No; we want a centralized body, however shadowy and limited in scope, to organize and dispose the force which is

to keep the world-peace. And, instead of a league of individual nations, as it were red and green and blue and white in their national temper and proclivities, we want a truly international force, homogeneous, impartial—an even and sober grey; like the police. A policeman may have been a collier or a shopkeeper or a landlord (of a public-house, not of an estate) or anything else; but once he has put on his uniform he is a policeman. And at any rate there are so many more policemen around him who have been something else than he has been that it is little use his showing his personal prejudice, if he has any.

What is possible in national life in this matter is possible in international life. It is only a matter of seeing it is possible. I will give a practical illustration—very briefly.

Say I command a battery. To-day my officers and men are all English. I am in France—or India—or Egypt. I am there on England's behalf. Why should my officers and men not be of mixed nationality? Why should not I have a Russian captain; one French, one Austrian, one American lieutenant? The men, similarly. (Language you will say?—we will come to that later, in the next section. Suffice it to say; that difficulty can be removed.) Why should not we be here in an international, not a national, interest; to see the peace is kept?—to police the place. Why should not there be, scattered throughout the world—on land, on sea—other units, like my own, sent there to see order is kept? Why should there not be plans made to cope with any situation of violence; to take it in time and suppress it? Why should there not be a great international force, manned and officered by all nations? It would be a splendid and fascinating force to which to belong. Naturally one would not be called upon to police (or to serve against) one's own land. One would travel. One would mix with diverse men of many nations. One would be taking part in the greatest work of mankind. It would be the Premier Service of the world.

And it would abolish war. It would render armaments (except, perhaps, for domestic police purposes) useless and

unnecessary. The world would be ruled by law—and force; by law with force behind it;—not by a utopian spirit of law abidingness; but by law and the police.

There is no impossibility in all this. It could be brought about to-morrow, if the world (or even a large part of it) were only to speak those three magic words: *We will it.*

III.

An International Language.

I remember when I was in Moscow about twelve years ago meeting some delightful young Russian students of my own age. We foregathered in the garden of the *pension* in which I was staying; we came together at dances; we even went mild excursions together. They knew a little German and somewhat less French; I knew a little French and somewhat less German. And once one of them voiced what we all felt.

"If only we could get over this clumsy difficulty of speech," he said, "how good it would be. Our thoughts are all there, in our heads; but I cannot give you my thoughts properly; nor can you give yours to me. O! that we could! We should be even better friends. We should understand one another better."

That young Russian was dealing with one of the prime obstacles to internationalism,—or at all events to that international thinking and frame of mind which is so essential to any international progress. To most men the language, literature, expression, and thought, of any other nation but their own is either a sealed book, or a book in which they can catch only a hazy and imperfect understanding—often only a misunderstanding—of the general sense. How can the nations be full friends, true friends, with this gulf of uncomprehension between them? How could even a man and his wife be full and true friends if they had to communicate by broken sentences—nods and signs—gestures? Translations and interpreters do something, it is true; but not very much. Imagine the man and wife—and an interpreter! No; the only solution for the

nations (as for the man and wife) must be a tolerable and working knowledge of some one tongue. With this, international amity, understanding, and peace, would be a vast stride nearer full realization. The nations would be able to get directly in touch, instead of relying on second-hand means of inter-communication. There would be one common method of expression, into which anyone could slip when he wished to make himself universally intelligible—if there were an international language.

There could be an international language, universally understood, in a generation. Universally understood;—sporadically it would be understood much sooner. At once, from the day it was initiated, it would begin to spread its filaments in amongst the dense mass of international ignorance. But in a generation it would be competently understood by a majority of all nations, and would be currently used for a multitude of subjects. A generation is a long time, it may be said. Not to ensure international understanding for ever afterwards.

The international language of which I am thinking would not be any *ad hoc* language. I should like to be very careful not to tread on the corns of Esperantists and other special-linguists; but I confess I see grave disadvantages and difficulties in trying to make universal any *ad hoc* language. In the first place, everyone has to learn such a language. Even the teachers have to learn it. Next, such languages have no history, tradition or literature. Lastly, they have something of the air of patent medicines; they are a specific—a fad. Or at least, so they inevitably seem to a large majority.

What then?

Well, if we are not to have some *ad hoc* universal language, one of the existing languages must be made the universal language. And obviously it cannot become the only, the world, language. It must stand in every country side by side with that country's language. It must be taught compulsorily in the schools; it must be made the medium for all international dealings, and even national

proclamations, laws, and so on, should be published parallel in the native and the international language. Newspapers would all of them have columns or pages in the international language. And wherever any foreigner was present, the international language would be talked.

This is no dream, no impossibility, this vision of a world of bi-lingual nations. Go to Wales, you will find how simple it is to teach a child to be bi-lingual. And it is no hindrance, but a help, to the general intelligence of the child to have a bi-lingual education. Think, too, of the increased pleasure and interest in life that is opened out to the bi-lingual child. Two literatures, the newspapers and gossip and friendships of two nations; nay, of all nations. It is little exaggeration to say that a thorough bi-lingual education could add fifty per cent to the possibilities of happiness for an intelligent child.

Which would be the international language? and how would it be instituted?

To take the first question by itself; after it had been decided in principle by a congress of nations to adopt a secondary, or international, language in all those nations, a council of linguistic and educational experts could be assembled and charged with the task of deciding which (after their own tongue, of course!) was the most suitable language to be adopted. Facility of pronunciation, simplicity of grammar, and other such points would decide the question in the main. One language would be chosen as the world-wide means of communication.

Then would come the business of making the chosen language universal. It would be a long and at first a laborious task. Many grown people would, no doubt, at once gladly start, and soon accomplish, a thorough study of the selected tongue. But the main work, the decisive work, would have to be done by the states. Teachers would have to be obtained, as far as possible, from the native country of the universal language. The state schools would not only teach the language, but they would soon teach (for part of the time) *in* the language. During

certain hours conversation would be in only the universal tongue. As far as possible all education and school life would be bi-lingual. Quite a different matter from the "French hour" or "German hour" of to-day. And none of this time would be wasted. Nor would the task be so difficult as would appear. Remember, it is the child we are taking. A baby can learn two languages almost as easily as one.

And when these babies grew up, the world would be of one tongue. There would be no bar to business, to friendship, to communion of ideas. We should be all able to speak together. Man would have defeated nature. We should be back beyond Babel!

IV.

Standardization.

Wherever a traveller goes to a fresh country he meets with, roughly, the same materials of life, but a different method of dealing with them. He finds money—gold, silver, copper, nickel; but coins of different values from those in his own land. He finds rice and corn and sugar; but a different scale of weighing them. He finds a postage system; but different stamps; crimes; but different laws; in a word, the working parts of life are to a different measure from those he has known.

Now, here, as elsewhere in this question of nationality and internationality, a dead level of similarity would be an evil. Over-standardization in nations would be as cramping and blighting as it would be, say, in the motor trade, where scope for individual taste and initiative must be duly blended with a certain useful amount of interchangeability. It would be a crime, even if it were a possibility, to condemn all nations, say, to our own coinage or stamps. Even did we get the best (to the general mind), it would be wrong to compel a minority to adopt it. The whims of man must be respected—where they are not actually harmful.

But between this nightmare of universality and the present utter absence of any standardization or reciprocity,

there is a mean. Much could be done towards facilitating the intercourse of nations by a judicious *rapprochement*, a politic surrender of prejudice on the part of those the basis of whose system was clearly inferior to that of their neighbours. Reciprocity or harmonization, where standardization was impracticable, would smooth many difficulties away. If one nation cannot have, say, the same laws as another, it can at all events avoid such a clash as must inflict injustice (as is the case at present in divorce law). Even if different coins are used, they can be divided in similar proportions, and, subject to fluctuation of credit, possess a clear relative value.

And here we come to perhaps the chief point where reform is possible, and where we are the ones to bring it about. Almost all other nations have adopted the decimal system in coinage, weights, measures, etc. It is clearly the best and simplest system, and were we in possession of such a system and another nation had ours, no objurgation would be too great for us to pour upon the offender's head. No doubt there are technical difficulties in the way of the change. There are always technical difficulties in the way of any change. There were insurmountable technical difficulties in the way of the Daylight Saving Bill. Yet, as in that case, when it comes to the point, technical difficulties need not stand in the way of a real reform. And were we to adopt the decimal system so far as it can be applied, we might, doubtless, suffer some temporary inconvenience; but we should confer a lasting benefit on, not only foreign nations, but on our future generations.

Into details as to the standardizing, or harmonizing, of coinage, weights, measures, postage and so on it is not possible here to go. But, generally, there might be, if not identity, some simple ratio in these between the nations of the world. A universal postage stamp might take its place beside the national stamps. Coins might be internationally valid without the present difficulties of changing—instances are plentiful already of various currencies being valid at the same time in the same place, and this could be

extended. Briefly, the citizen of one state could pay a visit to another without having, in many matters at all events, to learn a new system and assume a new equipment. All this would make considerably for international convenience, prosperity, and amity.

These questions, and deeper ones, such as similarity or reciprocity in laws and even perhaps in commercial matters, might be worked out by international committees for submission to their respective parliaments. What is certain is that any effort towards standardization would have a large field to work on and, in the end, a fruitful result.

V.

An International Party.

Some objects suitable for international treatment have now been suggested. It remains to discuss what better means than those at present existing can be devised to hasten and facilitate action. International committees, *ad hoc* conferences, excellent-minded Hague tribunals, are all very well; but what we want is practical results. To ensure these an increased internationality of thinking is a powerful factor; it will demand to see something done. But there must also be the machinery, the material means. And any sublime ideas of a Parliament of Man are, at present at all events, too altruistic and visionary. We must proceed by smaller and more practicable steps.

Now, one most desirable element in the campaign for the international idea is a great leader. He is a matter for fate and for opportunity. It is to be hoped that he will show himself. He will find much of the world ready to acclaim him.

But, given the leader, or a number of earnest and vigorous leaders, more is wanted. The leader, or leaders, must not waste their energies on a vague mass of thought; on unco-ordinated and impotent humanity. There must be a machine for them to direct. There are, of course, the existing national machines, and through them in the end

definite action must come. But still more is necessary. A complementary means to the leader and the national assembly is the establishment of international politics as a live and potent force. This would be the tool with which the new leader could effect his purposes. For just as we must labour under no illusions as to international peace being attainable by treaties or understandings or pledges, without force behind to see them kept, so we must labour under no illusions that effect can be produced in the sphere of international affairs by any less material means than in that of national affairs. Academic aspirations and conferences will produce little; the brute force of the vote can produce much.

Now, statesmen may discard the idea of any present form of international control; the average man may call him who believes it is bound to come a vain dreamer; but no one can prevent those in every country who desire a step forward towards internationality organizing themselves into a body, with all adequate machinery to make their ideas known and their force felt. The period immediately following the war would obviously be the most propitious for starting such a party of Internationalists; and it is possible—nay, probable—that such a movement, then initiated, would have powerful and lasting effects.

The Internationalists need not be, and must not be, an assemblage of academic idealists. They must have a reasonable and practical programme, and all the proper means of pushing it. They must make their pressure felt in the orthodox manner, through the polling booth. They must be a super-party; covering and permeating all parties everywhere.

The objection will at once be raised that the Internationalists would be doomed to failure because their success would never be more than partial, *i.e.*, they would succeed in one country and fail in another, and so their international ideal would automatically be destroyed. For instance, say some scheme of international limitation of armaments, promoted by the Internationalists, were

endorsed by a majority of the members of the House of Commons, but not by a majority of the members of the Reichstag—where would internationalism be then? And who would care to pledge himself to support disarmament, without first knowing whether the rest of the world would do likewise?

The answer to this is that a condition qualifying the international programme should be its international acceptance—either absolutely, or over a certain minimum and effective number of states. This might postpone success—or it might accelerate it.

Suppose a candidate for the Reichstag were to be asked: “Are you in favour of such and such a scheme of limitation of armaments *provided that the rest of the world agrees to the same?*”—would he not be more likely to subscribe to it, than to an unqualified declaration in favour of the same scheme? Similarly, in all countries. And the result might be—if such schemes were kept sane and practical—that one fine day we should look round and find that a majority in the requisite number of states had been obtained in favour of a definite scheme. The “*We will it*” of William Morris would have been spoken, and “the foeman” would verily be “the dream-strong, wakened and weak.”

This illustration serves to show that the Internationalists would be a party working behind, or rather, perhaps, independently of all other parties and party organizations. They would appeal direct to the people, and their results would indeed be the voice of the people unqualified by the trammels of national party interests, titles, rewards and so on.

The Internationalists though working independently of, and so to speak across, ordinary party interests and programmes, would probably have in the main to speak and act through the ordinary party candidates and members in every state. In some places where internationalism was strong, and particularly where some system of proportional representation was in force, they could get directly-elected members (though the advisability or need of these may be

questioned, except for the purpose of initiating legislation, and alertly guarding the international interest). But there could be, and would need to be, no international Government or executive; not even a large number of Internationalist members in Parliament—only an organization and a programme. For the rest, there would be the national assemblies; the old parties. There need be no waiting.

What would be wanted would be:

- (1) Organization.
- (2) Men of ability.
- (3) Money.

These, joined to inspiration and hard work could soon produce an international body of opinion whose weight would be felt in all the council chambers of the world.

This is no place to go into details, which could fill pages;—details as to programmes; places and times and methods of meetings; modes of propaganda; enterprises, such as a paper (*The Internationalist*), International clubs, tours, and so on. These can be worked out, if only the principle be conceded, and the project entered upon.

The real point is; there is a need, there is an opportunity, and there is a field of practical work. Not only do guarantees against war, sanctions to compel arbitration and obedience to its decrees, limitation of armaments, and such vital human matters cry for truly international treatment; but there is a host of other and minor matters, such as language, weights and measures, and harmonizing of laws, about which the heads of our international party could usefully busy themselves. There is plenty of work crying to be done.

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